



PRESS RELEASE

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COTTON CROP DOWN FROM LAST MONTH

Based on the December 1 Cotton Ginning Survey, **SOUTH CAROLINA'S COTTON** production is expected to total 430,000 bales, announced the USDA NASS South Carolina Field Office. This is down 30,000 bales from last month, but 20,000 bales above 2005. Acres for harvest, at 298,000, is up 33,000 acres from 2005 and 84,000 acres from 2004. This year's expected average yield per acre of 693 pounds is down 48 pounds from November 2006 and 50 pounds below 2005.

All cotton production in the **UNITED STATES** is forecast at 21.3 million 480-lb bales, virtually unchanged from the November forecast but down 11 percent from last year's record high production. Yield is expected to average 798 pounds per acre, unchanged from last month but down 33 pounds from last year. Compared with last year, yields are down in all States except Arizona, Arkansas, California, Tennessee, and Louisiana with growers in Arkansas and Tennessee expecting a record high production.

Upland cotton harvested area, at 12.5 million acres, is unchanged from the November forecast but down 8 percent from last year. American-Pima harvested area, at 324,000 acres, is also unchanged from November but up 21 from the 2005 harvested area. In the Southeastern region, favorable weather in Alabama, Georgia, and Florida allowed harvest to advance rapidly with progress well ahead of last year and the 5-year average, while in the Carolinas, continual wet weather during November delayed harvest activities. Objective yield measurements in Georgia show boll counts to be the highest, but boll weight to be the second lowest in the last ten years. North Carolina boll counts remain near average.